

Christopher Sharp QC



YEAR OF CALL: 1975

YEAR OF SILK: 1999

INN: INNER TEMPLE

JUDICIAL OFFICE: RECORDER
(2004), DEPUTY HIGH COURT
JUDGE (FAMILY DIVISION)

“ Christopher has a brain the size of a planet and always asks the right questions. He’s also just incredibly thorough and is lovely with clients. ‘He possesses an intellectual dexterity matched by few, so he’s able to understand and evaluate the most difficult of legal issues.’ ‘He is very precise and very prepared – everything you could hope for in a QC.’ ”

CHAMBERS UK, 2020
PERSONAL INJURY

Practice Overview

One of the leading personal injury Silks, Christopher’s practice encompasses both claimant and defendant work, and he is instructed in all areas of personal injury and clinical negligence. His work is focused on catastrophic brain and spinal injuries, complex medical causation issues, and procedural matters at appellate level. He has extensive experience in the Court of Appeal as well as in conducting cases before the House of Lords. He is listed in Chambers UK as ‘excelling in catastrophic injury and complex medical causation issues’.

Christopher is acknowledged by Chambers UK as one of only five star Silks in Family Law in the country and the only one outside London. He has extensive experience in high-value financial remedy, ToLATA and Schedule 1 cases, including those with a foreign element, many of which are dealt with by way of negotiated settlements. In children cases he is instructed by local authorities and parents, as well as the Guardian and Official Solicitor, in cases involving the serious injury or death of a child, in which issues involving complex medical evidence arise and where his expertise in the field of personal injury can also be applied. Issues of privacy and publicity frequently arise. His experience in personal injury work also translates to cases involving catastrophic injury to one partner where, in subsequent divorce proceedings, financial complexities surround the damages awarded and the particular needs of the injured party including those lacking mental capacity. He regularly appears in the appellate courts.

Areas of Expertise

Clinical Negligence

Christopher has been described by solicitors and the legal directories as an “outstanding silk” in clinical negligence and personal injury with a national reputation. He conducts the highest level of cerebral palsy/catastrophic injury claims in terms of both their complexity and value.

He is involved in multi-million-pound ongoing cerebral palsy, neonatal, catastrophic brain and spinal injury cases, particularly those involving complex medical causation and long-term care plan issues. He is experienced in negotiating solutions to funding problems involving indemnities or other facilitative outcomes.

He works nationally for both claimants and defendants, both at first instance and at the Court of Appeal, and regularly works with leading London and South West solicitors and national insurer firms.

Christopher is involved in giving talks to national organisations such as AvMA, Headway, and the Spinal Injuries Association.

He is known to be terrifically hard-working and has a reputation for being able to provide swift responses to requests for advice and guidance where the papers are voluminous and the timescales are short. He is regularly brought in at short notice to advise in consultation and to take part in round-table discussions at critical junctures in large cases. He is also well known for being an astute tactician and a highly skilled cross-examiner in court.

Although a senior Silk, Christopher is very much a team player who finds that a collaborative approach to running a case achieves a lot more for the client in terms of outcomes.

Court of Protection

Christopher's areas of work in catastrophic injury, including brain injury, his experience in complex public law children's cases involving those with learning and other cognitive disabilities, and his work in financial remedies where he is sometimes instructed by the Official Solicitor, or in cases of catastrophic injury where one spouse has received significant awards of damages, all bring him into contact with the practical consequences of mental incapacity and the jurisdiction of the Court of Protection.

Family & Divorce

Christopher is acknowledged by Chambers UK as one of only 5 star silks in family law in the country, and the only one outside London. With many reported cases, he is frequently instructed on appeals to the Court of Appeal. Christopher has extensive experience in high-value financial remedy, ToLATA and Schedule 1 cases, including those with a foreign element, many of which are dealt with by way of negotiated settlements or private FDR. His experience in personal injury work also translates to cases involving catastrophic injury to one partner where, in subsequent divorce proceedings, financial complexities surround the damages awarded and the particular needs of the injured party.

Christopher is highly respected for his expertise in high-profile care proceedings involving serious injury to or the death of a child, in which issues involving complex medical evidence arise and where his expertise in the field of personal injury can also be applied. He is instructed by local authorities and parents, as well as the Guardian and Official Solicitor. Issues of privacy and publicity frequently arise.

In private law child cases, Christopher represents parents and sometimes children in a wide range of disputes, achieving positive outcomes for them.

If you are representing a party involved in a family finance dispute (financial provision on divorce, Schedule 1 proceedings, and trust of land claims), Christopher can offer you and your clients Private Financial Dispute Resolution Meetings ('Private FDRMs') as a form of Alternative Dispute Resolution.

He sits as a Recorder and Deputy High Court Judge.

Personal Injury

Christopher is one of the leading personal injury and clinical negligence silks. He acts for both claimants and defendants, and the majority of his work involves multi-million-pound catastrophic brain and spinal injuries cases that very often contain complex medical causation and long-term care plan issues.

He is very experienced in negotiating solutions to funding problems involving indemnities or other facilitative outcomes.

He is known to be terrifically hard-working and has a reputation for being able to provide swift responses to requests for advice and guidance where the papers are voluminous and the timescales are short. He is regularly brought in at short notice to advise in consultation and to take part in round-table discussions at critical junctures in large cases. He is also well known for being an astute tactician and a highly skilled cross-examiner in court.

Although a senior Silk, Christopher is very much a team player who finds that a collaborative approach to running a case achieves a lot more for the client in terms of outcomes.

Christopher has extensive experience of appearing before the Appellate courts. He appeared for the successful appellant in the Court of Appeal in the case of *Mirvahedy v Henley* [2003] 2 AC 491 HoL; [2002] CA, and successfully upheld the decision in the House of Lords. He acted for Mr Hoare in the House of Lords in *A v Hoare* [2008] EWHC 1573, and appeared for the successful appellant in the Court of Appeal in *Hide v Steeplechase Company Limited & Ors* [2013] EWCA Civ 545, a case concerning the interpretation of Regulations 4(1) and 4(3) of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 and the effect of the EU Directive. He also appeared in an important case in the Court of Appeal about a highway maintenance decision in the case of *Devon County Council v TR* [2013] EWCA Civ 418.

As a result of his renowned expertise in personal injury and family law, he is also instructed in cases where divorce follows severe injury leading to complicated arguments over the distribution of damages awards and in which consequential issues arise over care packages. His experience in the field of public law Children Act work translates to negligence claims involving local authorities.

Professional Negligence

One of the leading family and personal injury Silks, Christopher's practice encompasses both claimant and defendant work. He is instructed in relation to professional negligence claims involving solicitors arising primarily from cohabitant disputes including ToLATA, trusts and estates, divorce, financial remedies and general matrimonial work.

Christopher has extensive expertise in cases of negligence in the conduct of litigation in the fields of personal injury and clinical negligence.

Recent Cases

- ▶ *Re K* (A Child: deceased) [2017] EWHC 1083 (Fam)
- ▶ *Hide v The Steeplechase Company (Cheltenham) Limited & Ors* [2013] EWCA Civ 545
- ▶ *Devon County Council v TR* [2013] EWCA Civ 418
- ▶ *Re JS (A Child) sub nom A County Council v (1) RH (2) KS (3) JS (by his children's guardian)* [2012] EWHC 1370 (Fam)
- ▶ *Re A* (suspended residence order) [2010] 1 FLR 1679 (Fam Div)
- ▶ *Bath & North East Somerset Council v A Mother & Ors* [2009] EWHC B10 (Fam) (BAILII citation)
- ▶ *H (A Child)* [2009] Civ 334, Family Law Week (5.5.09)
- ▶ *A v Hoare* [2008] 1 AC SHH
- ▶ *Bath & North East Somerset Council v A Mother & Ors* [2008] EWHC B10 (Fam)
- ▶ *Van Laethem v Brooker* [2006] 2 FLR 495
- ▶ *Leeson v Marsden and others* [2006] 1 WLR 1945
- ▶ *A v Hoare* [2008] 1 AC844, [2008] FLR 771
- ▶ *Poppleton v Trustees of the Portsmouth Youth Activities Committee* [2008] EWCA Civ 646, [2007] EWHC 1567 (QB)
- ▶ *RP v RP* [2007] 1 FLR 2105
- ▶ *Ram v Ram* [2005] 2 FLR 75
- ▶ *Stimpson v Excel Logistics and others* [2004] EWCA Civ 1249
- ▶ *Nineham v Glynwed International Ltd* [2004] QBD

- ▶ *Mirvahedy v Henley* [2003] 2 AC 491; [2002] CA
- ▶ *Irwin v Stevenson* [2002] CA
- ▶ *C (A child) v Woolcombe Yonge (A Firm)* [2001] Ch D
- ▶ *Mutch v Allen* [2001] CA
- ▶ *Shergold v Smith* [2001] QBD
- ▶ *Fearon v Dunlop* [1999] CA
- ▶ *Giblett v Murray* [1999] CA

Recommendations

"A superb and formidable advocate whose attention to detail and excellent grasp of the issues results in him outclassing his opponents time and time again. He is exceptionally clever and also has a charming manner with clients, immediately putting them at ease and giving them ultimate confidence in their representation. 'He's an intellectual powerhouse who leaves no stone unturned.' "

CHAMBERS UK , 2020
FAMILY/MATRIMONIAL

"His grasp of detail is remarkable and his breadth of knowledge entirely comprehensive."

LEGAL 500 , 2020
FAMILY AND CHILDREN LAW

"His technical understanding makes him ideally suited to complex brain injury and spinal injury claims."

LEGAL 500 , 2020
PERSONAL INJURY

"Christopher Sharp QC is the pinnacle. 'He is phenomenally intelligent and an excellent advocate. He has a very calming manner with clients and is extremely meticulous.' 'Very precise and a great tactical thinker.' "

CHAMBERS UK , 2019
FAMILY/MATRIMONIAL

"Highly esteemed silk acting in high-value personal injury cases, many of which involve complex medical evidence. 'He is supremely intelligent, but he also realises when others don't understand something and is able to simply his advice.' 'He is an excellent advocate and provides detailed and practical written advice.' "

CHAMBERS UK , 2019
PERSONAL INJURY

"A formidable advocate who can immediately put clients at ease."

LEGAL 500 , 2018
FAMILY AND CHILDREN LAW

"A brilliant silk."

LEGAL 500 , 2018
PERSONAL INJURY AND CLINICAL NEGLIGENCE

"Christopher Sharp QC is worthy of every accolade as he has superb client handling skills and a second-to-none intellect. 'His attention to detail and grasp of information in a case is second to none. His ability to forensically dissect the most complicated finance case and present it in a clear and persuasive way is to be marvelled at.' "

CHAMBERS UK , 2018
FAMILY/MATRIMONIAL

"His attention to detail and grasp of information in a case is second to none. A very forceful advocate."

CHAMBERS UK , 2018
PERSONAL INJURY

Related Articles

- ▶ Financial remedy update Winter 2019
- ▶ Financial remedy update Summer 2019
- ▶ Part 35 and the experts' joint statement
- ▶ Financial remedy update Spring 2019
- ▶ Financial remedy update Autumn 2018
- ▶ Financial remedy update June 2018
- ▶ Financial remedy update Winter 2017
- ▶ Financial remedy update Autumn 2017
- ▶ The family court's jurisdiction to direct the burial of a child: Re K
- ▶ Financial remedy update Summer 2017
- ▶ Financial remedy update Spring 2017
- ▶ Financial Remedy Update
- ▶ Financial remedies pot pourri
- ▶ Responsibility and Culpability? – Children and Contributory Negligence
- ▶ Knauer v Ministry of Justice
- ▶ A baker's dozen of financial remedy cases
- ▶ While you were sleeping...various developments since spring 2014
- ▶ "Robust" case management and judicial bias
- ▶ Implementing arbitration awards in financial remedy applications
- ▶ Financial Remedies: Nicholas v Nicholas no longer good law

Appointments

- ▶ Visiting Fellow UWE
- ▶ Elected a Bencher of the Inner Temple in July 2016

Professional memberships

- ▶ Family Law Bar Association (Founder Chairman of Bristol branch)
- ▶ Personal Injury Bar Association
- ▶ Professional Negligence Bar Association

Qualifications & awards

- ▶ MA (Oxon)

Additional information

Christopher was a founder member of St John's Chambers and former Deputy Head and Head of Chambers between 1988-2008.

Contact Christopher

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Contact the clerks

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